[Ohne Titel: Report über die Wiederauffindung eines in Dresden 1945 verbrannten Violinkonzerts von Albinoni]

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COMMUNICATIONS

REPORTS

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NICOLA SCHNEIDER (Universität Zürich) writes:

Among the irreplaceable cultural losses sustained by Dresden during World War II may be ranked many music manuscripts that had once been the pride of the former Sächsische Landesbibliothek. When on 13–14 February and 2 March 1945 British and American bombers incinerated the baroque jewel on the shores of the Elbe, many musical sources of the Landesbibliothek – at that time located in the Japanisches Palais – had not yet been put into safe storage. They were destroyed in the fire bombings or heavily damaged by floods, caused when the walls of the underground vault that stored the most precious treasures of the library cracked and let the water in. These sources included autographs by Vivaldi, Telemann, Heinichen, Fasch and Dittersdorf. Many objects that had survived the war intact in shelters outside the town were then confiscated by Soviet trophy brigades, and in the spring of 1946 they were moved to the Soviet Union. Even today the absence of such historical sources remains a painful gap within the holdings of the Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden. A considerable number of Dresden sources were recently identified in Moscow (see Karl Wilhelm Geck, Helmut Hell and Ingo Kolasa, 'Spuren – auf der Suche nach Musikhandschriften deutscher Provenienz in der Handschriftenabteilung der Russischen Staatsbibliothek in Moskau', *Forum Musikbibliothek* 27/4 (2006), 333–345), but the major part of the dispersed scores and parts is still missing, and it never will be decided unequivocally whether these objects were really destroyed in the bombings or if they lie in some unknown places in Russia. Thus it is an exceptional stroke of luck when microfilms of dispersed sources reappear, offering again to scholarship and musical practice works often preserved by these lost sources in a singular form.

The Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden holds the world's largest collection of Albinoni sources, including three autographs, but this fact cannot make one forget that the library lost four eighteenth-century manuscripts of works by the Venetian composer during World War II. Before the bombings and the confiscations at Dresden, between 1940 and 1941, the Italian musicologist Remo Giazotto ordered microfilms of Albinoni sources from all over Europe for his important pioneering study on the instrumental œuvre of the composer (*Tomaso Albinoni* (Milan: Bocca, 1945)). Long-standing enquiries that I had directed to the descendants of Giazotto at Pisa from 2006 had not been successful. Finally in February 2010 I succeeded, finding a microfilm in the Library of Congress at Washington (shelf mark Music 31 item 1), which is either the original owned by Giazotto or a copy thereof. That the Washington microfilm comes from Giazotto is apparent from the fact that the caption titles given before the single sources are in Italian. The Giazotto microfilm of the six sinfonias ascribed to Albinoni once held by the former Hessische Landesbibliothek at Darmstadt (old shelf mark Mus. 3003/1–6) and burned by the British bombing on 11 September 1944 was, fortunately, already known from copies. But the discovery of the Washington microfilm is a small sensation since it contains a complete reproduction of the manuscript with the shelf mark Mus. 1-O-2 (olim Mus. c. Cx 32), containing the only record of an unpublished violin concerto in D major by Tomaso Albinoni. The original source was described in the ancient systematic card file catalogue of the Sächsische Landesbibliothek as follows: *Concerto a Viol. conc. con 2 Viol, Viola e Basso, D dur, Part. sola., 4*. The incipits of the three movements of the Albinoni concerto – joined in a bundle with a concerto for violin, strings and thoroughbass by Giuseppe Matteo Alberti – were already known thanks to Giazotto (*Tomaso*

Albinoni, 348, no. 114). Talbot lists it under the number Co 3 in his *catalogue raisonné* (Michael Talbot, *Tomaso Albinoni: The Venetian Composer and His World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 280).

The microfilm of the complete score now allows one to make some precise observations about the lost source. The images show a typical 'travel score' written by Johann Georg Pisendel, who prepared many of these manuscripts during his stay at Venice in 1716/1717 and brought them to Dresden on his return. (A travel score features small handwriting and uses the full extent of the sheets in order to fit in as much music as possible.) The original source, as can be seen from the microfilm, was an oblong quarto fascicle of Venetian *tre mezze lune* paper frequently used by Pisendel for score copies he made in Italy. It is evident that this is an autograph by Pisendel: his fluent, small and elegant handwriting is unmistakable. The Albinoni concerto was the second work in the bundle and occupies eight pages. It begins on the same page on which the concerto by Alberti ends and of which the last bars are still visible. There are no doubts about its authenticity: codicological and paleographical context and stylistic analysis give no reason to question that we are dealing with a composition from Albinoni's best creative period. His rediscovered concerto is more than 'a characteristic but in no way remarkable work' (Talbot, *Tomaso Albinoni*, 170): the solo violin part is very elaborate and the other instrumental parts are finely crafted. The viola has a remarkably sophisticated line. The whole composition is pervaded by the aristocratic purity and moderation, the minutely chiselled motifs and the charming counterpoint that we appreciate in Albinoni. The incipit of the first movement, an Allegro, is close to that of the concerto Op. 2 No. 2. The second movement, a very short Grave, features a rhythmic gesture resembling one found in the second movement of Op. 2 No. 10, but the further development of these movements in the Dresden concerto differs notably from such precedents, going more in the direction of the concertos of Op. 5. Giazotto aptly characterized the final movement, an Allegro assai, as 'di elegantissima fattura, dal tema spigliato e fresco' (very elegantly wrought, with a bright, confident theme) (*Tomaso Albinoni*, 252–253). An edition of this rediscovered work, with a critical introduction, will soon be available from the ortus musikverlag in Beeskow (Germany). This concerto may not revolutionize our knowledge of Albinoni, but it restores to this world a work of great beauty thought to be lost for over sixty years.

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ANDREW KIRKMAN (Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University) writes:

On 29 December 1789 Mozart wrote to his friend Michael Puchberg inviting him to a rehearsal at his house two days later: 'On Thursday I am inviting you (and you alone) to come to my apartment at ten in the morning for a little opera rehearsal – I am inviting only you and Haydn'. Given that the opera being rehearsed was his *Così fan tutte*, the experience must have struck Haydn with a powerful sense of déja vu, one that can only have increased as, the following month, he accompanied Mozart to a further rehearsal and probably also one or more of the ensuing performances. The similarities between *Così* and Haydn's own *Le pescatrici* of twenty years earlier are palpable, and extend far beyond the similarities of plot, involving two sisters betrothed – in Haydn's case – to each other's brothers. The alternating duo writing in a number like the reconciliatory quartet, following – in reversed *Così* mode – the disguised seduction by the male leads of their *own* lovers, is just one of many moments that stand to give anyone familiar with both works a sense of déja vu.

However, when Opera at Rutgers (director, Pamela Gilmore) and the period-instrument ensemble Musica Raritana (conductor, Andrew Kirkman) presented *Le pescatrici* on 30 and 31 October 2009 at the Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University, the biggest surprise, for many, would have come from the lyrical beauty and sheer power of the music – ranging from the touching deftness of Frisellino's 'Fra cetre